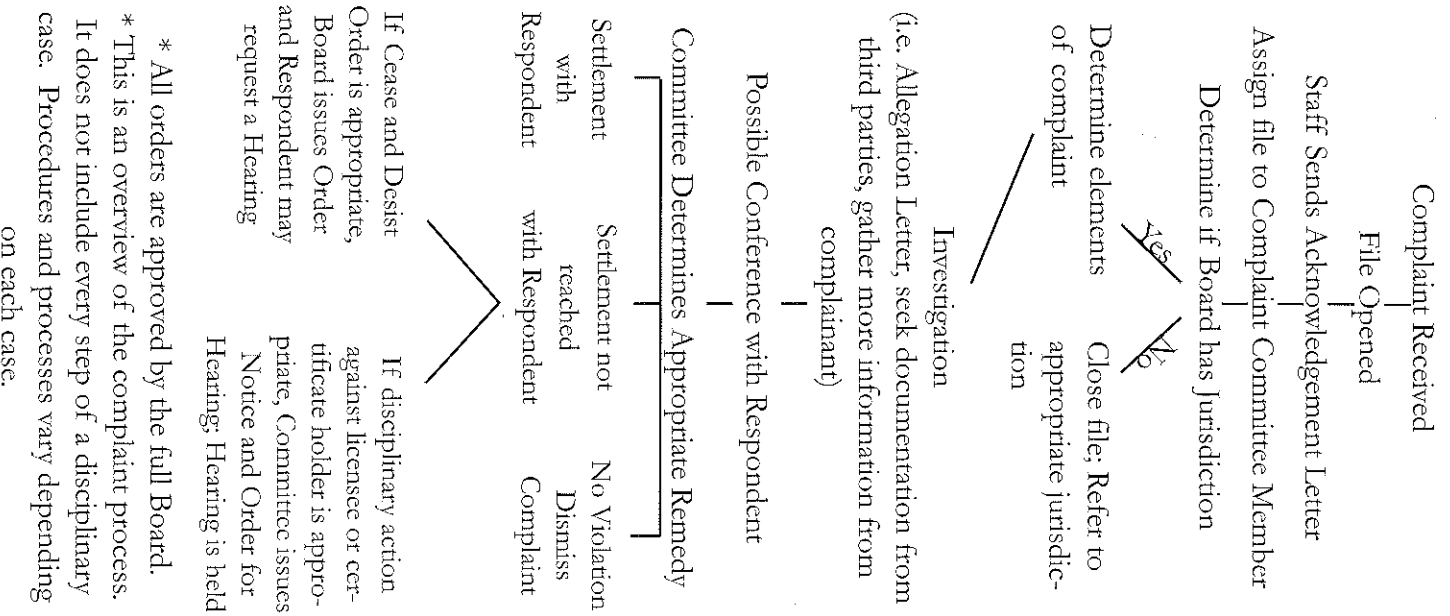


Overview of the Complaint Process



MINNESOTA BOARD OF ARCHITECTURE,
ENGINEERING, LAND SURVEYING,
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE,
GEOSCIENCE AND INTERIOR DESIGN

Filing a Complaint

And Other Information
About the Investigation
and Enforcement Process

Minnesota Board of Architecture, Engineering,
Land Surveying, Landscape Architecture,
Geoscience and Interior Design

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Mission of the Board

To protect the public's health, safety and welfare by providing reasonable assurance of competent and ethical practice in architecture, professional engineering, land surveying, landscape architecture, geoscience and certified interior design.

The principle laws that define and limit the Board's powers and responsibilities are:

- MN Statutes Chapter 214
- MN Statutes §§326.02-326.15
- MN Rules Chapters 1800 and 1805

The Board actively enforces these statutes and rules.

Filing a Complaint

In order to initiate the investigation process, the Board must receive a signed, written complaint.

There are two methods of submitting a complaint to the Board:

1. Submit a completed complaint form from the Board's website.
2. Mail a signed and dated written statement to the Board office.

Include as much detail as possible in your statement:

1. Identify the person the complaint is against.
2. Describe the surrounding circumstances.
3. Detail the specifics of the complaint.
4. Include any documentary evidence you might have (copies of plans, agreements, etc.).

The Board does not investigate anonymous complaints or complaints submitted by e-mail or facsimile.

Investigation and Review

Typical course of a complaint:

1. Board receives signed, written complaint
2. File is opened
3. Staff investigator thoroughly reviews file
4. Complainant (person who files the complaint) is formally notified that complaint was received
5. Staff investigator obtains, verifies and/or uncovers facts related to a complaint
6. Staff investigator obtains:
 - copies of design documents
 - building permits
 - photographs
 - relevant printed or electronic material
 - other physical evidence
7. Staff investigator may speak to individuals on the telephone, in writing or in person
8. Allegation letter may be sent directly to the Respondent (person complaint is against)
9. The complaint and response are presented to the Complaint Committee for review
10. Complaint Committee may:
 - close the file
 - continue the investigation
 - recommend disciplinary action
11. If a violation has occurred, the full Board will review and consider a recommendation from the Committee

Complaint Committee

The Complaint Committee is comprised of:

- Five Board members
- Two staff investigators

The Committee is supported and assisted by:

- The Board's Executive Director
- MN Assistant Attorney General

Disciplinary Actions

If the Complaint Committee finds that a violation has occurred, it makes a recommendation to the Board and the Board has the authority to take disciplinary action and will issue an administrative order to do so.

1. Cease and Desist Order: action taken against an unlicensed person requiring them to cease and desist from the unauthorized use of a title or practice of one of the professions under the jurisdiction of the Board, or from the violation of a statute, rule or order.

2. Stipulation and Order: action taken against applicants or licensees to deny, refuse to renew, suspend, temporarily suspend, or revoke an application, license or certificate; censure or reprimand the person; or condition or limit the person's practice.

3. Civil Penalty: up to \$10,000 per violation.

Complaint Closure

When a complaint file has been closed, the Complainant will receive a closure letter from the Board.

The provisions contained in the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, MN Statute §13.41 (2006), **prohibit the Board from disclosing the results of its review or the basis for its closing of the complaint file** other than disciplinary actions that result in a Stipulation and Order or Cease and Desist Order which are public information and are summarized in the Board's newsletter, *The Communicator*, and posted on the Board's website as they occur.